

The City in the Garden. The Garden in the City



PERIODS OF SIGNIFICANCE / BUILD-OUT

Development in the area began in earnest with the planning and subsequent annexation of **The Lakes** in the early 1970's, although single-family residential construction in the area dates to the 1963 **Tempe Gardens 3** tract in the northwest. Ensuing neighborhoods, such as Continental East and later phases of **Tempe Gardens**, were established to the north and northeast, as well as **University Royal 1 + 2** and **Tempe Gardens 16**, to the southwest, throughout the late sixties and very early seventies. These were followed by neighborhoods such as **The Lakes** in the center, **Tempe Royal Palms 12 + 13** and **Bradley Manor** [and **Place**] to the south and **Optimist Park** to the east in the early seventies, culminating with **Camelot Village** and **Round Valley Estates** in the southeast in the mid-to-late seventies. Several single story duplexes, tri- and four-plex units were also developed in the mid-seventies.

Schools and community facilities, as is typical, followed residents, with construction of **Evans Elementary School** leading the way in 1966, followed by **Marcos de Niza High School** in 1969, **Arredondo** and **Bustoz Elementary Schools** in 1975, **Rover Elementary** and **Fees Middle Schools** in 1978 and **Aguilar**, **Fuller** and **Kyrene del Norte** in the mid-eighties [Aguilar underwent a major renovation in 2010]. The **Kiwanis Park and Recreation Center** was built in 1984.

ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN

Most commercial development occurred from the mid-1970's to the mid-1990's, although newer buildings are sprinkled throughout the area. The "garden" and "professional" office building types, in particular, enjoyed popularity at this time through much of the area, beginning in **The Lakes** vicinity in the late seventies, spreading east along Baseline, then south along Rural and McClintock and, finally, west and east along Guadalupe. Major retail centers, in addition to **The Lakes** [which was only intended to serve the surrounding master-planned community], included **College Park Center** [Alpha Beta, now **Whole Foods**] and **Lakeshore Village** in the mid-to-late seventies, **Marcos de Niza Plaza** [Rural + Guadalupe] and **Tempe Square** and **Pueblo Anozira** at McClintock and Guadalupe, all in 1988.

"Big Box" retail arrived with construction of **Target** at McClintock and Baseline in 1991, followed by an expansion of the **Fry's** [originally Smitty's] across the street into **Fry's Marketplace** and the recent **Lowe's** and associated development on the former Earnhardt Ford site at Rural and Baseline. Office development consisted mostly of garden and professional office buildings, many located along Lakeshore Drive, as well as some along Guadalupe. The area even features one of the first two mid-rise office buildings in the entire city, the 6-story **DHS Building** at the southeast corner of Rural and Lakeshore Drive.

ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER + STYLES

With build-out of the area occurring primarily from the early seventies through the mid-nineties, variations of several architectural styles are seen, from late “mid-century” modern [**Baseline Medical-Dental**], to the “California Contemporary” of **The Lakes** and modernized versions of Pueblo [**Pueblo Anozira Center**] and Spanish Colonial Revivals, including the recent **Lowes Plaza**.

Most single-family residential architecture [although very little was actually designed by architects] throughout the area is a variant of the ranch style. Popularized in California in the late thirties by designer Cliff May and *Sunset Magazine*, the casual simplicity of the ranch house lent itself to southwestern living and large-scale post-war tract development. **Tempe Gardens 3** contains the earliest examples in the character area, with traces of Polynesian and other variations. Later examples throughout the area tend more toward late Ranch, with fewer “eccentricities.”

POINTS OF DISTINCTION / SOURCES OF IDENTITY

Located near the geographical center of the character area, **The Lakes** represented a large-scale master planned and themed development, compete with major infrastructure improvements, theretofore unseen in Tempe.

As such, it established a character and identity for single and multi-family residential, as well as commercial architecture, in the area which remains strong some 40 years later. The “California Contemporary” style, introduced and adapted to Arizona by architect and professor Calvin Straub, FAIA, and adopted by **The Lakes** and surrounding developments, was promulgated by Tempe’s fledgling Design Review program, proving both enduring and endearing.

Another significant architectural statement was made in 1988 with the construction of the **Pueblo Anozira Center**, designed by the firm of architect and professor George Christensen, FAIA, in a contemporized version of the Pueblo Revival style. The flat walls, covered in earth-toned shades of smooth-troweled stucco, culminating in undulating parapets and skirted by porticos of peeled-log columns and distressed heavy timber beams supporting clay tile roofs, established a character that would permeate the vicinity for the next several years. Although also built in 1988, Tempe Square [across McClintock from **Pueblo Anozira**], was not as distinctive until undergoing substantial renovation in the mid-nineties, coincident with the addition of tenants such as **Changing Hands Bookstore** and **Wildflower Bread Company**, at which point it blossomed into one of the primary visual focal points and destinations of the character area.

